

THE MUSICAL MAGAZINE.

VOL. I.

JUNE, 1835.

No. 2.

PRACTICAL.

VOCAL EXECUTION.

IN continuance of the remarks which appeared in the former number we now proceed in the second place to speak

OF INTONATION. The term *intonation* as here employed, has special reference to musical scales, and relates to the various existing degrees of gravity and acuteness. A vocalist is said to have a true intonation when he sings in perfect tune, and to have a false intonation when he sings out of tune.

Though the faculty to which we allude, is one that might be universally acquired, if proper recourse were had to early cultivation,* yet in no case is it found to exist as a mere instinct of nature. The very scales which we use, are in some respects artificial. Nature furnishes us, as elsewhere observed, with hints, materials, and susceptibilities, and invites us to the exercise of our powers; yet these powers can be fully developed, only by a long course of practice. As in the art of painting, nature furnishes us with light and shade, with the principles of perspective, &c., while she leaves to the hand of cultivation, the right employment of these properties and principles; so in music, she supplies us with intervals of every name and description, and with innumerable harmonic proportions and combinations, while she leaves us to the exercise of our own taste and invention, about the employment of the given materials. Nature presents us, indeed, with inimitable specimens of painting; but she never draws them out gradually with a pencil, upon an artificial canvass. This is the work of a mimic artist. So, while she furnishes us with the life and soul of music in the countless voices of the animate and inanimate creation, she never produces musical compositions to our hand, or condescends to the work of putting the

* Fourteen years ago, when the "Dissertation on Musical Taste" was written, this subject had not been so fully investigated.

strings of the human instrument in tune. She *never* does this. Every child, after all that has been said of precocity of talent, every child is in the first instance, a slow and awkward tuner. All, it is true, are not equally untractable. There is a difference of natural talent in music, just as there is in painting, in poetry, in oratory. Yet, in every case exertions and opportunities of some sort, are indispensable to the development of the human powers: nor do we ever think of saying that none but a Demosthenes should be allowed to speak, or none but a Homer to write poetry. And we are still farther from supposing that every one who is incapable of becoming an orator or a poet, should be discouraged in his attempts to understand the use of language, either in poetry or prose. The same maxims of common sense should be employed about the subject of musical cultivation. All are susceptible of some improvement; and since the duty of singing the praise of God is a general one, it certainly ought not to be neglected as it has been by almost the entire mass of the community.

But to return. As the habit of correct intonation can be acquired only by practice, so by the simple circumstance of neglect, it may be lost after it has once been acquired. The man who relinquishes the practice of singing will fail at every point, but nowhere more visibly, perhaps, than in respect to his intonation. The muscles which had been taught to vibrate almost with mathematical precision, will soon begin to falter, and at length become more and more unmanageable till cultivation is resumed. Temporary weariness, hoarseness, timidity anxiety or animation, will only aggravate the evil. What an argument might here be furnished in favor of daily practice. "Seven times a day," says the Psalmist, "will I praise thee." Yet the man who will omit the exercise of singing entirely for days together, will of necessity, sing more or less out of pitch, whatever may have been his previous qualifications. This principle is perfectly well understood in respect to instrumental music. One who is out of practice is always a bad performer. And yet, what instrument is at once so delicate and so complicated as that which produces the human voice?

What are called *vices* of intonation are also very prevalent among ordinary singers. These arise from singing or practising upon instruments where a bad intonation prevails, or from forcing the voice beyond its ordinary volume, or natural compass. It is only by the severest and most laborious process of discipline, for instance, that the voice of adult males is ever brought to have a fine intonation of the falsetto notes. The best of teachers too, who expend their time chiefly in the

training of uncultivated voices, are liable themselves to get out of tune, while at the same time they can detect a similar fault in others. The faculty in question therefore, depends not *wholly* upon the gift of a *musical ear*. The latter though indispensable, is equally dependant on cultivation for its existence and preservation. The ear needs instruction and practice, if it is to acquire and preserve the power of minute discrimination. Many false notions are afloat in relation to this subject which ought to be discarded.

But in the next place, if the principles here laid down are correct, it will be easy to understand many things which have sometimes been deemed inexplicable. It is easy to see, for example, why some whole families learn to sing, while others remain entirely mute and indifferent to the subject. In the one case a parent or a nurse or some one of the inmates of the dwelling, has, all unconsciously perhaps, been performing the office of a tutelary minstrel; while in the other, the voice of song has been too seldom heard for the purposes of successful imitation. We can here see also, the reason why some whole districts of country are found uniformly to have one or more false notes in their scales. There has been wrong instruction. The same vices of intonation descend from parents to children and from one neighborhood to another, till correction as in reference to provincialisms in dialect, becomes almost impracticable. We may here learn also, why some whole nations have used but five or six notes, instead of eight in their scales. They have made but small advances in the work of cultivation. The same principles too, will enable us to understand why adults who have all their lives neglected the subject, should prove such dull scholars in intonation, when they are at length induced to make the experiment. It is like proposing a "Shibboleth" to the Ephraimites. It is as if a citizen of France or Germany were to acquire the pure English pronunciation. The thing is in no case physically impracticable. But will it ever be effected? The man will soon learn to speak *intelligibly*, and in like manner the individual who has never attempted to put his voice in tune till late in life, may hope to make such improvement as to secure the purposes of personal edification, if nothing more. And in cases of laborious perseverance, much more will sometimes be effected.

We might enlarge under this head, did our present limits permit; but we must hasten to bring these remarks to a close.

The importance of this subject will be readily admitted. False intonation produces unpleasant melody and false harmony. It is wholly incompatible with good music. And when we recollect how difficult it

is to realize and preserve just intonation in our musical performances, it seems indispensable that the subject should have more attention, than it has hitherto received. Vocalists should be self-suspicious in this respect, teachers should often try their voices by the standard of good instrumental execution; and learners should always sing with a listening ear. Much skill should be employed upon the process of training. Bad voices should have individual exercises, adapted to their condition.* As intonation has constant reference to harmony, it is important in practice, to commence with the plainest chords, and to render these familiar before other combinations are attempted. Just principles on the subject should be early established, and singers, even the very best of them, should be taught not to consider themselves infallible.

Were these hints duly estimated by teachers of music, we should soon realize a striking improvement in the character of our public exercises. Mathematical perfection is of course unattainable; yet by long practice we may approach so near it, as to realize effects which are at present unknown to the generality of listeners.

We would not be too fastidious in this particular, but really most performances of sacred music are quite intolerable in respect to intonation. Common chords are mangled, discords abused, and chromatic intervals disregarded. The simple congregational style often results in mere jargon. A special instance within our recollection may serve as an illustration. A hymn was given out in a lecture-room, containing these lines:

"With instruments well tuned and strung,

"We'll praise thee with the heart and tongue."

But when the song arose, the sacred promise contained in the words was broken at every syllable of the exercise. Not an instrument was there. Most of the voices had neither been tuned nor strung nor cultivated. The whole performance fell far beneath the dignity of lip-service; and as to the heart (we would not pretend to *decide* in this matter) it is extremely difficult to conceive how the affections could have been called forth under such circumstances, in the sincere expression of elevated praise. Our services of this nature are too often an empty noise. Instances like the above are not uncommon. How must they appear in the eye of a heart searching God?

* The former practice was to refuse them in almost every case, the privileges of the school. But much light has been shed upon this subject within the last few years, and a better course of management is beginning to prevail.

IS THERE ANY REMEDY?

THIS question has often been proposed among the friends of sacred music, in reference to the decline of interest, the depreciation of taste and the diminution of talent which so generally ensue at the close of a singing school, during the summer months. The question is one of the deepest interest. The negative answer which is usually given, does more perhaps, than any thing else, to dishearten the friends of cultivation. And they have some reason on their side. If the work of cultivation has of necessity only a temporary influence, if a fabric reared with so much labor, expense and difficulty, is of such a destructible nature as to sink by its own weight, and fall upon the heads of its founders, there is indeed, ample cause of discouragement, and we need no longer wonder at the general indifference which prevails in reference to the precious interests of devotional music.

And yet how seldom has a more favorable result been witnessed? The close of a singing school has generally fixed the date of a musical declension more or less gradual in its character, which has in the course of its progress swept away almost every thing valuable that resulted from the exertions of the teacher. In process of time things get into so bad a state that a school is again instituted, when another teacher builds on a new foundation a fabric equally destructible with that of his predecessor, and this too with labors more arduous and persevering, and in the face of increasing difficulties and discouragements. Thus in the majority of instances, the music continues in the congregation perhaps for half a century without any very visible or permanent improvement. Every temporary interest which arises is sure to subside in a little season, and give place to a reaction, which, to say the least, reduces things to their former state. Sad indeed has been the history of musical cultivation in most of the American churches. Declension has been added to declension. Discouragement has on the one hand, led to apathy, indifference and neglect, while on the other it has created disunion of sentiment, and opposition effort.

Now we say again, if this state of things, as has generally been supposed, really admits of no remedy, or at least of none which is at hand, and within the ordinary reach of cultivation, then there is good reason for discouragement and inactivity. The cause, for aught we can see, must be abandoned as hopeless. That which was once easily accomplished, has at length become impracticable. The art itself has de-

generated, or man has changed his physical nature ; and, what is more, the blessed institution of devotional music has outlived its utility, and like the ancient rights of the Jewish religion, waxes old, and is ready to vanish away.

But, before we come to such conclusions as these, it may be well to institute a more careful inquiry in relation to the subject. Perhaps in all our former reasoning, there has been the putting of cause for effect. If a man, building a house of slender materials upon a foundation of sand were to be so often foiled in his undertaking as at length to grow indolent or reckless of consequences, we should be far from excusing him or commending his improvidence ; or if a man carrying a moderate burden up a steep hill were uniformly after ascending a few paces to throw it from his shoulder and permit it to roll back to its former place, we should not dream of telling him there was no remedy. We should chide him for his indolence, laugh at his stupidity, or suspect him of being insane. There would here be no difficulty in understanding the matter. Every thing would be perfectly plain. And the causes of this musical declension, if we mistake not, are equally obvious, if not equally destitute of an apology. It will be said perhaps, that there has been much want of musical information ; and that in multitudes of cases, ignorance and prejudice have been insurmountable. True, but these considerations we imagine, would have little weight if they were thrown into the balances of the sanctuary. We are not in the habit of supposing that the duties inculcated in the Bible are really of an impracticable nature, however much we may incline to neglect them or may fall short in our sincere efforts to perform them.

Let us then come immediately to the point before us. Are the causes of the declension we have alluded to, of such a nature, as that they may be easily removed ?

1. The neglect of juvenile instruction is one of the causes. In countries where music is most successfully cultivated at the present time, the rudiments* of practical music form a part of primary education. Children under such a course of training, all learn to sing. All will not become great performers ; nor is it necessary that they should ; but all, the deaf and dumb excepted, will give sufficient demonstration of musical susceptibility, and acquire sufficient knowledge of the art, to form a solid basis for future improvement. This is not idle speculation. There is no contending against facts, and these are abundant in reference to this point. Much as it has formerly been disputed, there is no longer

any doubt on the subject among well informed musicians. Even in our own country the experiments, so far as they have been made, have been attended with the most satisfactory results.

And what if the teachers of our common schools were to introduce this branch of cultivation among their pupils? Then, to resume a former illustration, we should no longer be laying a foundation upon the sand. We should in a little time be supplied with a solid and permanent basis. There is now no want of manuals of instruction, and teachers upon this plan, if proper encouragement were given, would soon be competent to their work. And if the work of cultivation were carried also into the higher schools and colleges, we should soon be in a fair way to build a durable superstructure. At present, much of that time, which in adult music schools ought to be devoted to vocal expression and heart-felt praise, is of necessity given to the dry details of the science, which after all, are imperfectly understood, and very partially remembered. The consequence is, that the pupils make very little progress in the more important branches of style, and that little which they acquire is easily lost.

2. The want of proper religious influence in our schools and meetings for improvement. The love of novelty draws numbers of our giddy youth together, and leaves them after a little season to retire, one by one, as the means of gratification are found to diminish. Others are influenced simply by a passion for fine music, which can of course, find little means of indulgence among the simple elements of singing. Others still, will have more reference to scientific principles, than to the claims of devotion. Where all these things are combined, there can but little progress be made in the science, and the worst of all is, that devotional feeling finds little encouragement, and but few opportunities for improvement. Prayers become formal, singing becomes mechanical, and exhortation, if its voice is ever heard, speaks but faintly and extends only to the surface of things; while "those who are spiritual," feel themselves scarcely edified by any one thing which occurs within the practice room. If our social religious meetings were at once to become reading schools, schools of elocution and schools of the fine arts, and schools for special prayer, we should be furnished with a lively illustration, of the character of many a singing meeting among the members of a christian community.

3d. No vocalist or accompanist can neglect the exercise of his talent without diminishing it. This principle is universal. The mere circumstance of discontinuing a school then, will inevitably bring about a

disastrous result, unless frequent meetings can be held for mutual instruction. Persons it is true may sing in their families during hours of devotion, but this, though a matter of prime importance, will in most cases be insufficient to secure a good performance in the sanctuary. Families in a congregation, will of course be interspersed, and those who will thus sing together will soon feel the want of uniformity of manner.

We are now prepared to dispose of the great question before us. Let juvenile cultivation do its proper work, then our adult schools will make higher advances and more solid acquirements. Then also, our schools for devotional music will more easily maintain the savor of christian influence. Their character will be improved in every respect. Individuals will acquire sufficient practical knowledge to enable them to direct the performances and give interest to the meetings for mutual edification. Above all, let christians feel their obligations to do their utmost, in forwarding the praises of Zion. Let them know and feel, that in pursuing this course, they are doing no works of supererogation but simply performing a solemn christian duty. Let them seek not chiefly for enjoyment, but for the praise and glory of God. The *best* they can bring, will be poor enough in the service of so glorious a Being.

The plan here marked out, we are bold to say, is the only practicable one which can secure permanent success. And we can say with equal confidence that if thoroughly pursued it will prove effectual. It has both reason and experience on its side, and what more can be wanting? Certainly the subject is worthy of an effort, a bold effort, and a persevering effort. By the blessing of the great Master of assemblies, such an effort will not fail to be attended with ultimate success.

ABUSES OF SACRED MUSIC.

(Continued.)

8. CARRYING about the church a long pole with a money bag at the end of it, during the last singing, so that each worshipper may keep the hymn book in one hand, while with the other he makes the bountiful donation of one cent into the treasury. Which of the two services thus combined, has probably the most influence upon the heart?

9. Calling for a song of praise at some moment of bustle in a public assembly ; inviting the people to *listen to the performance* of a beautiful piece of devotional harmony ; calling out "*music, music!*" for the special purpose of quieting the noise and soothing the impatience of the people ; uniting various other occupations with the singing, merely for the purpose of gaining time. How extremely absurd ! What if a minister were to be called upon to *perform a prayer* for similar purposes ? And what if some worthy layman were requested at the same moment to offer his speech upon a resolution !

10. Requesting the leading singers of a village, congregation or musical society, to make special preparation for some important occasion ; and then, when the evening arrives, consuming so much of it with long speeches, that the singing must be omitted through want of time. This vexatious evil is rather on the wane.

11. Whispering and smiling among the congregation, nobody knows why or wherefore, during a song of praise ; while the strange compliment is to be returned by the members of the choir, as soon as the song is ended. This evil is most prevalent on occasions of special interest ; and in *some cases* it increases instead of diminishing, with the progress of musical cultivation.

12. A false inference drawn from the circumstance last named, unfavorable to the institution of sacred music ; while the true inference which touches the question of individual responsibility, is withholden. Would such licenses as No. 11, be tolerated during the exercise of social prayer ? Or, if tolerated, which of the two things would they demonstrate, the intrinsic inefficacy of prayer, or the want of a praying spirit among the individuals concerned ?

13. Giving out so large a number of stanzas at one time as to fatigue the singers, and weary the patience of the listeners ; and at another time, so small a number as to preclude the practicability of musical expression. Giving out a hymn that has more resemblance to the skeleton of the sermonizer, than to lyric poetry. These things may serve to some extent the purposes of the worthy speaker, but they are death to the interests of *devotional* song.

14. Giving out during the various exercises of the Sabbath, from six to nine hymns all of the same metre. No choir in the land would secure the purposes of adaptation at such a rate. A "well educated minister," when once remonstrated with, in reference to this subject, declared in great simplicity, that he had supposed the metre of the poetry could have no influence upon the choice of tunes,

But, enough for the present. There would be no end to the enumeration of abuses. Their existence shows the low state of feeling which almost every where exists in relation to the divinely appointed office of sacred praise. Who will come up in earnest to the work of reform? It is not the work of an hour, nor of any class of individuals exclusively. All must unite in it, for all have sinned in this matter, and many with a high hand.

MENTAL ASSOCIATIONS.

THE importance of maintaining hallowed associations in reference to times places and exercises of christian worship, is generally admitted, except in regard to sacred song. Here it is but little thought of, while yet the *principle* of mental associations enters largely into the true theory of musical composition, and forms, we had almost said, the whole basis of adaptation. Many devout persons who are unacquainted with music (what a solecism!) we are sorry to say, are quite sceptical on this subject; and not a few of them, in consequence of this mistake, actively array themselves in opposition to every just principle of discrimination. We invite the attention of such persons to the following familiar remarks of Dr. Beattie, which, as they were penned half a century ago, in a foreign country, can have received no bias from any of the real or fancied improvements of the present day.

"Would it be expedient or discreet to sing a psalm to the tune of a common ballad, or a common ballad to the tune of a psalm? And yet, perhaps in itself, and previously to the influence of habit, the ballad tune might have suited the psalm or psalm tune the ballad. But when we have once and again heard certain notes accompanied with certain words, the words or the notes, heard separate, will mutually suggest each other. So that if such a transposition were to be made, it would raise in every person of sensibility a mixture of jarring ideas, which by blending things profane with things holy, and seriousness with laughter, would debase the imagination and impair that strength of mind by which we retain the command of our own thoughts. For how is it possible that our devotions should be promoted to-day, by the same things which yesterday in the hour of relaxation, lead us to think of drinking and merriment, and the amours of Strephon and Chloe! Those * * * *
* * therefore * * * who either adapt their psalms to the mea-

asures or sing them with the music of common songs, must be very ignorant of human nature, or very inattentive to the right performance of this part of worship. Nothing connected with levity or with trivial passions, should ever be seen or heard in a place appropriated to the solemnities of religion."

Had the good Doctor lived in these modern days of innovation, he might have found the tune "*Drink to me only*," set to sacred words; the song "*Farewell ye green fields*," (amatory ballad) applied to the words "*ye angels who stand round the throne*," an old jig associated with doggerel stanzas on the "Judgment seat," and a thousand other instances of mal-adaptation equally preposterous. The old notion of "robbing the adversary of his best tunes," forms no manner of apology for such things. One could scarcely please him better than by such a course, after he has clothed the tunes with such unhallowed associations. This species of lawless innovation upon the empire of taste, makes serious havoc with the commonwealth of devotional song; and every good man who understands the nature of this subject should bear decided testimony against it.

ENGLISH AND GERMAN HYMNS.

A writer in the London Evangelical Magazine, estimates that the whole number of approved English hymns among all denominations of christians, does not probably reach to five thousand, while the German hymns in popular use from the pen of Luther, Nicolai, Homburg, Paul Gerhard, and their successors, reaching down to the time of Klopstock, and Gellert and Lavater, in a great variety of measures, and a large proportion of them of the highest order of excellence, amount to more than seventy thousand!

What an immense disparity as to numbers! Probably, not over one out of three of the five thousand hymns in our own language is after all really fit to be sung. But the Germans are a musical people, and poetical specimens of a lyrical character are obtained with comparative ease in such a country. There is a special demand for them; and hence they will be forthcoming.

Piety and poetical talent are very naturally combined. There is here no "paucity of topics," as the great Johnson erroneously imagined. Where the *heart* is deeply engaged in "inditing a good

matter," it will learn to find effective utterance; and as to the imagination, the whole world, visible and invisible, lies open to the eye of faith, treasures inexhaustible, illustrations boundless as eternity and beautiful as they are boundless. The English language is not deficient in poetic literature. But poets have been at war with musicians. Let the hearts of both be reformed and melted, and filled with the sweet breathings of heavenly inspiration, and a new aspect of things will soon be seen. We shall have better music and better poetry. Such a state of things we trust is approaching.

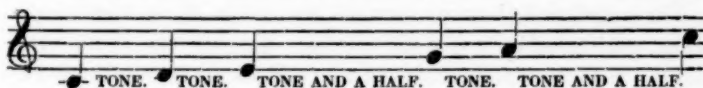
Meanwhile, what if some of the thousand doggerel stanzas in use, which are so tormenting to the musician, were to be laid aside in favor of such as are every way preferable to them. If clergymen and laymen who lead our devotions, have any feelings of compassion for singers who lie wholly at their mercy in this respect, let this suggestion be well weighed and remembered. Our whole system of psalmody needs renovating, both as to poetry and music. A reform in the latter, we are quite sure, will lead to improvements in the former.

THEORETICAL.

MUSICAL SCALES.

WE intimated in our former number, page 15, that the musical scale of the Sandwich Islanders is more imperfect than that of the generality of semi-barbarous nations. This we inferred in the first place, from a remark of the missionaries at that station, that it had been almost impossible to teach the natives to sing with accuracy, the simplest melodies which are known in our own country; and in the second place, from the fact that the musical instruments of that uncultivated race, are exceedingly simple and limited in their compass. But since our former number was issued, a letter has been received from Dr. Judd, of Honolulu, containing an incidental remark which throws additional light upon the subject. The difficulty in intonation of which the missionaries complain, has respect chiefly to the third and seventh degrees of the major scale. After immense labor in drilling, the natives it would seem, continually incline to identify the third degree with the fourth, and the seventh with the eighth of the scale in all their performances. The other intervals of the scale, they acquire with comparative ease.

It seems probable therefore, that the instruments we examined (a rude shell, and a set of pandean pipes which had been sent us) were imperfect things of their kind. But however this may have been, the two intervals now complained of, are precisely the same which are wanting in the ancient Scottish and in the Chinese scale; and, what is still more worthy of remark, the same intervals of the scale are found among uncultivated singers of our *own land*, to give far more trouble than any of the remaining six. What then if we were just to expunge the two intervals in question? We should have simply this scale of six notes,



which should seem to be at once an appropriate basis for the *rude melodies* of several distinct climes, far distant from each other, embracing some hundred millions of people with their favorite minstrels! Shall it be said that not one of this immense multitude is a "*natural singer*." Such would be the decision according to the popular notion which has prevailed in this country; and doubtless if such persons were to offer themselves for instruction they would in the multitude of instances be rejected, by many a celebrated teacher among us, as instances of a *bad voice*, or *defective ear*.

Now if there were no other facts before us than these, we should think it quite philosophical to turn the tables against such teachers and say that the countless millions above mentioned are the *natural* singers while their accusers are lawless innovators. But other facts are abundant. A great number of scales have been in use during the lapse of ages, some of which, to say the least, it would puzzle any modern vocalist to execute or appreciate. Cultivated musicians of the present day, have also two distinct scales (major and minor) called *primitive diatonic*. To those they add derivative chromatic and enharmonic scales, both of which, as well as the two primitive scales are without an exact parallel in the music of the ancients. What is more evident then, than the inference we have so often drawn, that a fixed scale of sounds is not the work of instinct but in every instance the result of practice or cultivation?

The first strain of the old Highlander's song, "*Scots wha hae, wi' Wallace bled,*" may serve as a specimen of melody upon the six note scale.*



The second strain however, contains one note on F, the fourth in the scale, which possibly, is of a different date from the rest of the tune. But the moment any one undertakes to add an accompanying part to the melody, he of course must use the two discarded intervals of the scale, i. e. both the fourth and the seventh.



This brings us to the point we had principally in view, viz. that musical scales contain the elements both of melody and harmony. Melodies are formed out of fragments of some given scale, where the notes are heard in simple succession, as in the first example of the above song. Harmony is formed when certain different portions of the scale are heard simultaneously, as in the last example. The laws which regulate the various combinations of simultaneous melodies, constitute the rules of harmony. Our limits will not admit of the full development of these rules; but we intend from time to time, to give such familiar hints upon the subject, as may be deemed useful to the practical musician.

TREATMENT OF DISCORDS.

WHEN the poet said "all discord" is "harmony not understood," his words conveyed a meaning to the scientific musician, of which he himself had little conception. The design of employing discords in musical composition, is as various as it is important. This may appear, should we be permitted to speak of the subject of composition in some

* Such melodies might be the fittest to be employed at first by the missionaries.

future number of the Magazine. But the manner of treating discords in execution, so that the harmony may not be misunderstood or abused, claims our early attention. A few hints are all that we can offer at the present time.

1. Discords in musical composition are constantly arranged with reference to the accent. A disregard to this circumstance in practice, will often render them offensive to the ear, where the opposite effect is intended. Simply by receiving a loud utterance instead of a soft one, or a soft instead of a loud one, their design may be frustrated.

2. The composer in the employment of discords, has more or less reference to the harmonic intervals embraced in them, such as the octave, fifth, third, sixth, &c. ; and the omission or doubling of any such interval, or the laying of too much or too little stress upon it, will often have a bad effect. The concords in connection, require equal care.

3. The composer has reference also to the time of notes and the rhythm of a movement. The same things should be borne in mind by the executant.

4. He has constant regard to the prevailing sentiment of the piece, and the characteristic emotions that appertain to the given passage containing the discords. A discriminate regard to expression is equally necessary to the executant.

5. We might also add, the indispensable necessity of accurate intonation. This among the multitude of performers at the present time, is not easily secured. See the first article in the preceeding pages. Nor is its necessity always duly estimated. The process of tuning the voice to such intervals as the added sixth, the dominant seventh, &c., is not very difficult, in the hand of a *master*.

Were we to dwell upon such hints as these, our observations might appear too minute, yet their importance cannot be too highly estimated ; for they are fundamental in their influence upon musical performers.

Discords are as necessary in music as bold imagery is to the poet or the orator, and if they require great care and skill in management, their influence will richly reward the labor of cultivation.

MISCELLANEOUS.

THE MUSICAL CYCLOPÆDIA: or the principles of music considered as an art and a science; embracing a complete musical dictionary, and the outlines of a musical grammar, and of the theory of sounds and laws of harmony, with directions for the practice of vocal and instrumental music, and a description of musical instruments. By William S. Porter. Boston, James Loring, 1834, pp. 332, 12 mo.

(Concluded.)

THE work is got up in good style. The typography is fair, and the articles are brief and well written. Some authors, perhaps would have chosen a more modest title; but it should be recollected that the age for large books and small titles is rapidly passing by. While heavy octavos give place to pocket volumes of an inch and a half in breadth, there seems little objection to reducing the heavy quartos of a boundless Cyclopædia to a single volume of duodecimo size.

To be serious, the work before us is a brief dictionary, with some few of the articles extended, though far less so than in the celebrated but shapeless dictionary of Rousseau. Many of the articles at the same time, are too limited to be extensively useful, and our impression is, that more objects are glanced at by the compiler, than could well be disposed of in any three volumes of the same size. We regard the work therefore, chiefly as a convenient book of reference to the theoretical and practical musician; and as such we cheerfully recommend it to the patronage of a discerning public.

But before closing this article we wish to advert to two or three topics which have a distinct bearing upon the interests of devotional music.

1. Since the God of nature has furnished the whole human species with musical organs and susceptibilities, and commanded "every thing that hath breath" to praise him, how greatly is he dishonored by that general neglect of cultivation which is so extensive among evangelical christians! Abuses are innumerable. The most frivolous thing serves as a pretext for trampling upon the art. Even where some public efforts are in progress towards restoring it to its pristine purity and importance, how few are the professed christians and christian ministers who lend their personal exertion or influence in favor of the undertaking. The most persevering often become discouraged amidst the accumulating obstacles; while not a few, after commencing the employment with alacrity, grow weary, and in a little time, relinquish all further effort.

And is there not One above that takes notice of this delinquency? "Ye said also behold what a weariness is it? And ye have snuffed at it, saith the Lord of Hosts; and ye have brought that which was torn and the lame and the sick, thus ye brought an offering. Should I accept this of your hand? saith the Lord."

But, aside from the solemn *duty* of praising God after the manner of his own appointment, why should the church, we desire to ask, continue to deprive herself in so great a measure, of one of her precious privileges? Why should she reject or poison one of her sweetest sources of religious enjoyment and spiritual edification? If we mistake not, much of the barrenness, the langour and the formality complained of in public and private assemblies, may be attributed to this mismanagement. The precepts of the Bible give much instruction on this point. The examples of the Apostles and the early Christians are quite against us. Who among us, for instance, would ever think of singing the loud praises of God at the solitary hour of midnight in the depth of a filthy dungeon! All our habits and all our maxims in relation to this subject, fall far below the real meaning and spirit of the scriptures. Yet if christians do not take the word of God for their rule in this thing, where is their warrant for supporting the institution at all? Better relinquish it at once, and save themselves the labor of redeeming it from its abuses.

2. Though all might learn to sing, who should be instructed from their infancy, the thing is not so readily effected in riper years, where the subject has been neglected. Prejudices become invulnerable. Habits grow inveterate, and the muscles often acquire almost an unconquerable measure of rigidity. Hence the importance of early *juvenile* instruction. Children soon become adults, and occupy in society the vacated places of their parents; and then, how delightful to find the voices of a whole generation, attuned to the praises of the living God! Adults of the present period it is true, have their own individual work, which must not be neglected. The praises of God cannot be deferred. They must be offered now. Yet where cultivation commences late in life, we seldom see it much distinguished for its success. If we would have the art fully established upon its proper basis, the juvenile population must not be neglected. Let cultivation begin in families and primary schools, and it will easily find admittance into our higher seminaries, where it cannot fail to make delightful progress.

Something has occasionally been said in favor of the establishment of regular musical professorships in our academies and collegiate institutions. We like the suggestion, but this alone would not suffice, for

securing the object contemplated. It would be beginning just in the places where cultivation ought to come to its maturity. The measure no doubt, would be one of importance. Much good would ultimately result from it; and among other things, a full and general conviction upon the public mind, of the necessity of thorough juvenile instruction. This subject we think, deserves far more attention than it has yet received.

3. How far is it expedient to avail ourselves of the aid of instrumental accompaniments in our public and private devotions? In relation to this subject, there are some diversities of opinion, which we are not anxious to discuss. Some persons would infer from the language of David's Psalms, that the harps, the timbrels, the high-sounding cymbals (or whatever answered originally to those names) should have their fair representatives in modern days, and their reasoning often seems plausible. But one thing appears perfectly clear. From the nature of Christian worship, it is evident that instruments if now admitted to the solemn service of God, should be no more than auxiliary accompaniments to the human voice. They should be in this respect what they anciently were in the hands of the prophets, mere accessories to the vocalist. The human voice must be the grand instrument in thanking and praising the Lord. If the ancient heathen sinned in "making to themselves musical instruments like David," for the worship of their idols; the irreligious in modern times, it should seem, would not commit a less offence by bringing their loud "sounding brass and tinkling cymbals" into our religious assemblies, to *drown the few and feeble voices* of the pious worshippers. Yet something not unlike this in principle, is often witnessed, when not a syllable of the words sung can be heard in the whole assembly. This is a flagrant abuse of the institution of sacred music. We do not wish to be severe, but there need be no mistake as to this point. The matter is so palpable as to need no comment or explanation.

But whether instrumental music might not be so improved and managed, as to be of special service to our vocal performances, is in some respects a different question. Instrumental music as an art, will not be abandoned. It ought not to be. It will no more be laid aside, than painting and poetry and sculpture. In many instances, too, the persons who would be the most forward in excluding it from the sanctuary, are tenacious of retaining it in the bosom of their own families. Among this number are some of the very pillars of the church, whose children, while they spend years in cultivating it, do not really give as many hours to the systematic cultivation of that branch of the art which

forms the basis of devout thanksgiving and praise. Persons *thus* educated are of no assistance to devotional singing, but rather a hindrance. In too many instances the whole family by this means become gradually alienated from the pleasant service, excluding themselves for years, perhaps for life, from the spiritual advantages of the office of sacred praise. The evil of which we speak is in such cases, uniform and inevitable; and it will necessarily continue till the causes are removed. Nor does it confine itself to the individual families in question: it extends wide over the face of the community, operating like a secret canker upon the vitals of social religious enjoyment.

What then shall be done? Shall such families be induced to cast their instruments aside? Or shall they be allowed to consecrate them to the service of God, in their household devotions? At all events, instrumental music, like the other arts of imitation and design, will continue to be cultivated in the bosom of Christian society; and it will doubtless maintain its hold upon the sympathies of our nature. Then, we say, let it be reformed and consecrated. Let it be redeemed from its perpetual frivolities, its occasional profanities and impurities which like a hidden fire are secretly consuming those tender susceptibilities that are so essential to religious edification and spiritual enjoyment. As to the mere public use of instruments, so far as the question rests on expediency, enlightened experience will be found a safer guide, than theoretical speculation.

M. M.

The following communication is from a Lady of high influence and respectability.

For the Musical Magazine.

MR. H.—I wish to relate to your readers an incident which though common of its kind, is attended with an important moral.

I went one evening in company with my friend Mrs. ——— to take a "sociable cup of tea" with Mrs. ———, who with her husband were members of the same church with ourselves. They had an only daughter on whose education much pains had been bestowed and no expense spared, and as we had heard of her great proficiency in music, we anticipated no little pleasure in listening to her performance. My friend, whose heart had long been tuned to the praise of God, was passionately fond of music, and was one upon whom it had a peculiarly enlivening and elevating influence. She expected that evening to en-

joy a rich treat, and as soon as the tea was removed, requested Miss _____ to favor us with some music. The request was immediately complied with; and we found the young proficient did indeed, play and sing to admiration. After a few German waltzes, and Italian Airs which of course had little effect towards raising the feelings of one whose harp was so soon to be tuned to Immanuel's praise in the holy choir above, the young lady was desired to perform "Strike the Cymbal," as it was a favorite tune of my friend's. But she neither knew the tune or could produce a copy of the notes. So she rattled away at "Buonaparte's March." A request to play "*Eve's Lamentation*," "Daughter of Zion," &c. &c., was equally unavailing, and though most of the German, French and Italian airs of the secular school, were familiar to the performer, not once were we gratified in hearing her piano attuned to any thing that could be called sacred music, much less to the praises of God.

My friend was greatly disappointed; and on our way home expressed her surprise that professing christians should allow their daughters to waste so much time and expense in perverting their talents and devoting exclusively to the world those interesting powers which God designed to be employed in praising him. I was struck with the remark as being just. It has left a deep impression upon my mind, particularly as my friend has since gone to unite her voice with those happy spirits who are singing the song of Moses and the Lamb. A. Z.

REMARKS.—We are sorry to say that incidents of a similar nature frequently occur among pious families that are in circumstances of affluence. The sweet tones of the female voice, and the soft notes of the piano forte have been seldom combined in the praises of God; and, what is worse, from four to six years exclusive instruction in secular music of the prevailing school, *inevitably vitiates the taste* of the fair pupil in relation to sacred music of the devotional style. Parents who have made a solemn covenant with God, to train up their children for *his service*, will do well to think of this. The day of final reckoning will bring strange things to light in reference to this subject. We are no enemies to the cultivation of secular music, or to the admirable instrument to which allusion has been made. But we grieve to see *exclusive* devotion to such music in pious families. It is bringing too evidently, a reproach upon the cause of Christ. We should like to know how many families that have been thus educated are found to enjoy the sweet psalms of praise in their hours of devotion at the domestic altar.

The following brief article from a worthy clergyman, comes to us like good news from a far country. The topics he proposes for our consideration shall be duly kept in mind.

MR. HASTINGS.—I have read your Musical Magazine with pleasure, and I congratulate you upon its publication. Its influence, I trust, will be both salutary and permanent. I hope you will press the consideration that sacred music is a part of divine worship appointed by God, and of perpetual obligation. I hope you will then settle the matter, that all persons have by nature the power to sing if they will not neglect the duty of learning till late in life. Then it will be easy to show that, each christian being bound to improve his talents to the utmost all (with the above limitation) are chargeable with hiding a talent, who do not qualify themselves to sing in the sanctuary. And I hope you will especially show that those are guilty of this sin, who, having considerable skill in music, refuse to take a part in the exercises on the ground that singing at church would be *beneath* their dignity. Yes sir, I wish to have you throw the whole responsibility of this matter upon the churches as a thing of duty, a command of God. And I hope the time is not far distant when every individual who is not too old, or who is not inevitably prevented will be considered subject to discipline, in case of his neglecting the praises of God.

Another topic—and I have designedly but just hinted at the ones above: another topic which has been hitherto neglected, but is of immense importance, is the commencement of musical instruction while the pupils are very young. We ought to begin with children, and keep them at the study. This will induce them in after life, to practice singing as long as they live and can speak. I believe the time is coming, and I hope it may be speedily hastened, when we shall no more think of neglecting to learn our children to sing, than we shall of neglecting to learn them to talk, to write, or to cypher. I hope, fifty years hence it will be far more difficult to find an individual destitute of a practical knowledge of sacred music, than it is now of finding one incapable of reading. I mean no puff, but am in real earnest. These things are important. And I hope you will *prove* them so. One thing more, I think the ministers of the Gospel are under special obligation to patronize the cause in which you are engaged,

A PASTOR.

P. S. I forgot one thing, Sir. I hope you will treat largely upon the evil of hiring *cheap teachers* of *doubtful qualifications* and *for but two or three months in the year*. Also upon the folly of *changing*

teachers, and the importance of giving teachers in music a permanent salary. Then they can afford to qualify themselves thoroughly. They will be of real use and may get a permanent residence, and enjoy a home somewhere in the world like other men.

VERMONT RESOLUTIONS.

A *musical convention*, as appears by the Vermont Chronicle, has recently been held in Bennington County of that State, which promises well for the future progress of cultivation. The object of the convention was to devise and adopt some efficient measures for the improvement of church music in that portion of the country. Among the individuals that were present, three at least were clergymen, Rev. Messrs. Plumb, Anderson and Hooker, who took a conspicuous part in the exercises. The resolutions prepared, discussed, and adopted, on the occasion, were of too important a nature to be withholden from the public. Motives of personal delicacy might have led us to the omission of article 10; but we will not mar so interesting a document as the one before us. It greatly rejoices us to see such sentiments coming from such a source.

1. *Resolved*, As the sense of this Convention, that sacred music is a part of divine worship, the importance of which, to the prosperity of religion, has been greatly and sinfully disregarded; and that in this sin ministers and churches have taken the lead.

2. *Resolved*, That the proper view of this part of divine worship is that which treats it in all respects, as much an act of devotion as prayer: and as requiring, both in those who lead as performers and those who join as fellow-worshippers, the same devoutness, reverence, sincerity, and activity of affections toward God.

3. *Resolved*, That we deem it of great importance to the interests of sacred music, in our churches, that children and youth be thoroughly educated in the knowledge and practice of it; and that it is the imperative duty of Christian parents to furnish their children the necessary means for obtaining such education.

4. *Resolved*, That the importance and seriousness of this object requires that there be extended a conscientious and liberal encouragement to teachers of sacred music, of good moral or religious character, and who have qualified themselves for this employment, as a profession.

5. *Resolved*, That the Scripture doctrine respecting sacred music—i. e. the numerous and express instructions of the Scriptures on this part of divine worship, ought to be carefully studied by ministers, and

presented, from time to time, in the pulpit; and that churches and congregations should be both willing and desirous to be "thoroughly indoctrinated" in this branch of divine instruction.

6. *Resolved*, That this Convention look with deep regret upon those habits of thinking relative to sacred music, in the Christian community, which treat it as an art insignificant in itself; and the profession of a teacher of sacred music, and the post of a singer in a choir, as not respectable.

7. *Resolved*, That ministers of the Gospel are in duty bound to be frequent, and as far as practicable, regular, in their attendance on the singing schools of their congregations; and, if singers or performers on instruments themselves, to employ their abilities in aiding the practice of their choirs; and also to give occasional lectures to them on the art of music.

8. *Resolved*, That this Convention regard it as being in perfect consistency with the nature and objects of sacred music, that instruments of music be introduced into more extensive and skilful use in our public religious assemblies; and that we do earnestly desire and confidently anticipate the arrival of the day when the groundless and ridiculous prejudices of some against their use shall be removed.

9. *Resolved*, That there is need of enlightening and quickening the consciences of our churches and congregations on the duty of furnishing the pecuniary means for the cultivation and support of sacred music;—this is a duty resting upon all who would do *any* thing to advance the interests of the kingdom of Christ in this world.

10. *Resolved*, That this Convention do approve of collections of that class of pieces of sacred music adapted particularly to social religious meetings; and that we recommend the adoption, in our churches and congregations, of that valuable and excellent collection, by Messrs. HASTINGS and MASON, entitled "Spiritual Songs for Social Worship."

11. *Resolved*, That frequent rehearsals, by choirs, throughout the year, are indispensably necessary to the best interests of sacred music.

12. *Resolved*, That this Convention consider and declare themselves a permanently organized body, for the promotion of Sacred Music in Bennington County and vicinity; and that when an adjournment takes place, it shall be, to meet at *Dorset*, on Wednesday, the 6th day of May next, at 9 o'clock, A. M.

13. *Resolved*, That a committee of five be appointed, to report a Constitution and Rules, at the meeting aforesaid, to be held at *Dorset*.

[The Committee appointed, were Messrs. Hooker, Anderson, Robinson, Fay, and Reed.]

TUNES FOR THE MISCELLANY.

It was not the editor's intention to present all the pieces of this or any other number under the single signature of H. A variety of signatures will be found in our next. For the benefit of a portion of our readers, we venture to offer a word of comment upon the pieces which have appeared.

No. 1, is a beautiful specimen from the devotional music of Switzerland. It is distinguished for tenderness and sweet simplicity; and the movement should be rather slow, and in the legato style. The Rev'd. author resides in Geneva.

No. 2, is a specimen of the *speaking* melodies of the Germans, differing essentially from the heavy parochial strains of that nation. The style of performance has great resemblance to chanting, though the time must be preserved uniform and accurate. The words must also be uttered in a bold emphatic manner, as seen in the following lines:

"A - wake OUR SOULS, a - way OUR FEARS,
Let ev - ry tremb - ling THOUGHT begone!"

No. 3, needs no special comment. It can speak eloquently for itself.

No. 4, has slight shades of dramatic interest corresponding with the views of the poet. The duets should move in a slight and graceful manner. The second movement, "O, worthy," &c., may at first be treated as a semi-chorus, reserving the full power of voice for the final repetition. The time should be neither rapid nor slow. The prevailing sentiment of the words will serve as a proper indication.

No. 5, is a mere task or exercise for learners. All the parts are to be sung successively by each of the four individuals, commencing at different times, so as ultimately to bring out all the harmony.

No. 6, may chance to covet a hearing among some of the Sunday School Celebrations of the Fourth of July. Its character is perfectly obvious.

No. 7, is more elaborate. The first and second movements should be slow, sustained and deeply sentimental. The third movement, commencing as it does in full unison, will not be found difficult where there is some share of cultivation among the performers. The sentiment brightens a little at the fugue, introducing a climax of joyous emotions at the final strain. The piece requires throughout a chaste and delicate style of execution.

No. 8, shall be permitted to speak for itself.

These hints though superfluous to the distinguished amateur and professor, will not be deemed impertinent by the inexperienced leader and the docile learner.

MAL-ADAPTATION.

THE editor of the Musical Cyclopædia, mentions as a strange instance of mal-adaptation, the application of a Tyrolese Waltz to the words

"Christ the Lord, is ris'n to-day."

The music referred to, we presume is the piece which commences thus :



What may we not expect to see from American compilers, after such a specimen as this? One step further, and we shall have "Lovely Nancy," and "Nancy Dawson," upon the list of sacred melodies. Report says they are already beginning to aspire to this honor among some of the private circles of this city, where music is not cultivated. Teachers ought to bear the most decided testimony against such outrages upon musical decency.

SINGING AT THE NEW-YORK ANNIVERSARIES.

THE singing at the anniversaries of the religious associations during the past month in this city, we may be permitted to say, gave evidence that considerable improvement has been made in cultivation during the past year. Had we ourselves been less active on these occasions it would have been our privilege to say more than this; as well as to speak in commendation of the individuals who cheerfully gave themselves to this acceptable service. We hope that better things are yet to come. So far as the Presbyterian, Dutch Reformed, Baptist and Methodist churches of the city are concerned, cultivation, a few choirs only excepted, is quite in its infancy.

Saturday evening of the anniversary week was devoted to the subject of church music. Rev. Dr. Matthews being present took the chair, and the meeting was addressed by several speakers, relative to the duties of private christians and of christian ministers, and of the cultivators of music generally, in regard to the praises of God. On this occasion, there was a full attendance as well as an accession of numbers to the Chatham street choir. For reasons already mentioned, we forbear to speak of the performances. But those of our musical friends who live at a distance, will allow us to say, that the evening was truly delightful: and to express the hope that it will prove to have been the commencement of an anniversary of devotional music which is destined to have an important bearing upon the great and permanent interests of the cause.

Meetings have since been held in this city, to take into consideration the subject of organising a musical society or institution for the promotion of this interest, on some practical principles which may secure extensive co-operation. But the proceedings are yet of an incipient character.

EDITORIAL CORRESPONDENCE.

PRIVATE letters have come to hand from various sources which show an increasing interest in the cause of devotional music. Among the number is one from a clergyman of much influence and respectability; who, it seems, would rejoice to stand up with the singers at church, and assist them, if there were any convenient way of access to the choir from the pulpit. Such are his views of the importance of sacred praise as a christian duty.

A teacher writes us from one of the large cities of the west, that the state of church music in that region is deplorably low. He has himself gained new views of the importance of his occupation and is at length determined, to consecrate himself entirely to the devotional interests of the art.

A third correspondent requests some directions about the application of music syllables, &c., in respect to two or three difficult tunes in *Musica Sacra*. We have leisure only to refer him to pages 21 and 22 of the same work, (stereotype edition) where he may find an answer to such inquiries.

A fourth correspondent who is a missionary at the Sandwich Islands, (referred to in the previous pages) has been for a long time trying to teach the natives to sing, which he represents as a task extremely difficult and laborious. Still he perseveres, and at Honolulu, where he has longest resided, a choir are beginning to sing tolerably well; while a few of them can read music with some facility. This species of cultivation is thought to have an important influence upon the natives; and the missionaries availing themselves of music types presented sometime since by Mr. William Williams of Utica, are publishing a little book for the natives, much after the manner of the "Spiritual Songs," now extensively circulating in our own country. The work had progressed to 88 pages, 56 of which are devoted to the rudiments. Few of the missionaries, it seems, are capable of leading the music, and the writer regrets that he himself had not paid more attention to the subject before leaving the United States. This hint may not be amiss to such persons as are endeavouring to fit themselves for missionary labor. Should the men who are sent out to lead others in the duty of prayer, be perfectly mute as to the praises of God?

MUSICAL EXPENDITURES.

OUR readers in the country have little idea what it costs to get up "grand musical performances" in the true city style.

A single performance of a grand Oratorio by the Sacred Music Society for instance, costs from five to six hundred dollars. To say nothing of the Theatres, the expenses incurred at the new Opera House, amounted, during the first eight months to the round sum of \$81,000!!

And what sums are paid here in support of devotional music? Truly, we are ashamed to tell. The expenses of a single Oratorio at Chatham Street Chapel would pay two or three leaders of church music for fifty-two Sabbaths, and as many secular evenings beside. And the Opera—why, the simple interest upon the first eight months expenditures of this institution, would probably amount to more than is paid in one year for devotional music to all the leaders in our Presbyterian churches.

The following poetic effusion is from the pen of Mrs. BROWN, of Munson, Massachusetts, author of the tract "Poor Sarah," of the beautiful hymn, "I love to steal awhile away," and of other pieces in the Village Collection, under the signature of "B." Her signature appears occasionally in the religious journals; and we are pleased to add, is found in the "Nursery Songs," and in the "Mother's Hymn Book," mentioned in our last. We feel greatly obliged by such favors as these.

(For the Musical Magazine.)

There's music in the birds' light song
That makes the groves rejoice;
The echo's which the strains prolong
Have music in their voice.

There's music in the hum of bees,
That sip the pearly dew;
The murmurs of the forest trees
Are strains of music too.

There's music in the purling rill,
That cheers the lonely shade,
That winds along the sunny hill,
And irrigates the glade.

There's music in the river's flow,
Which mars the mountain's side;
The ripple of the lake, below
The torrents fearful tide.

There's music in the thunder's roar,
There's music in the gale;
The surges high that lash the shore
Have music in their wail.

There's music in the stormy howl
Of Ocean, in his wrath;
There's music in the billow's growl,
And in the whirlwind's path.

Through nature's realm, so vast, so fair,
These melodies are found,
But richer tones of music far,
Are in the vocal sound.

The music of the human voice,
To man so kindly given,
Seems formed to speak immortal joys,
And swell the song of Heaven.

P. H. B.

Munson, May 2d, 1835.